

## R E M A R K S

By means of the foregoing Amendment, independent Claim 24 has been amended to stress its patentable distinction over the cited prior art. In particular, the image pickup apparatus of Claim 24 requires that one processing circuit is disposed along one side of a pixel area and another processing circuit is disposed along an opposite side of the pixel area, to perform a predetermined processing for the same pixel area or to perform a predetermined processing on a signal output from a same amplifier provided in common to the pixel area. The processing circuits may correspond, respectively, to the clock circuit, electric power circuit, A/D converter, and analog circuit, shown for example in Fig. 2 of Applicants' drawings. Each of those devices may perform a predetermined processing for each of pixel areas 102a-d, or perform a predetermined processing on a signal output from each amplifier 201.

In the Office Action, the cited Muramatsu publication was applied to the primary rejecting reference against Claims 24-27. However, although Muramatsu discloses in Fig. 6, for example, that a plurality of processing circuits are disposed along each of opposite sides of a pixel area, the one processing circuit (e.g., 182) and the another processing circuit (184) perform a predetermined processing on signals output from different pixel areas (e.g., 102 and 104) through different signal paths, respectively. Accordingly, the Muramatsu reference does not disclose the claimed plurality of processing circuits now required in amended independent Claim 24.

Similarly the cited Sato and Meyers patents do not disclose the requirement of Claim 24 that the opposing processing circuits operate on signals related to a single pixel area, rather than different areas as disclosed by the Muramatsu publication. Particularly, the Sato patent discloses in Fig. 2 that different amplifiers are provided for respective pixel areas, so that opposed processing circuits do not operate on signals from the same amplifier as required in Claim 24; and the Meyers patent fails as a rejecting

reference for the same reason, in that it does not disclose the particular relationship for the processing circuits as now required in Claim 24.

For these reasons, Applicants believe that Claims 24-27 are allowable, and the issuance of a formal Notice Allowance is solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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